

Staying Current with Trends in Libraries

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I am interested in several areas within librarianship, including but not limited to the following ones: biomedical and health special libraries, academic libraries, data librarianship, library administration, and archives and preservation. I will use the biomedical and health special libraries as an example on how I plan to stay current with developing trends in library. In the biomedical and health area, I will watch the following trends: impact factor, user experiences, environmental scan, and trend watching sites.

First, I will identify the top five journals to read about new scientific discoveries and methodologies. One of the ways to identify top scientific journals in the field is to use an impact factor. The impact factor (IF) measures the frequency of citations of a particular journal article in a given year. Each journal receives its rank based on a two-year average and the higher number means the higher ranking; it is more prestigious to publish in a journal with high IF. According to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (n.d.) and Nature Communications (n.d.), the top journals in the biomedical and health sciences are *The New England Journal of Medicine* (IF 70.670), *The Lancet* (IF 59.102), *Nature Reviews Cancer* (IF 51.848), *JAMA-Journal of the American Medical Association* (IF 51.273), and *Nature Reviews Immunology* (IF 44.019). Second, I will observe the academic health sciences library, a branch within the university library. For example, I have noted the library's new master plan, *The University Library Transformation Project Branch Libraries Master Plan*, proposes to move physical books to a storage facility and to create "spaces" such as "simulations suites, experiential learning spaces, research commons, digitization suites, teaching spaces, spaces for students to de-stress and decompress" (University of Saskatchewan, 2020). Currently, the veterinary medicine branch closed and its collection joined the health sciences branch reflecting *One Health* signature area of

the university. Third, I will continue an environmental scan. For example, when driving I listen our local 650 CKOM radio. This channel provides me with regular COVID-19 updates and cover current and controversial topics (I usually learn a lot while driving long hours). I will continue watching TV news (on different channels to get different point of views), follow library associations and top biomedical and pharmaceutical companies on Facebook and read newspapers (I have a personal, publisher extra, subscription to newspapers.com, which is an online newspaper archive). Fourth, I will regularly check Trend Watching (n.d.) and Trend Hunter (n.d.). For example, *Womb Stories* video campaign may result in an increased research of painful periods, miscarriages, pregnancy, menopause, etc. (Trend Watching, n.d.). Trend Hunter's *Health* (n.d.) is of a special interest as it offers information about new health-related innovations.

The identified trends in the area of biomedical and health sciences may affect a library's services and resources, as well as its funding, programming, and staffing. I would like to use the University of Pittsburgh (Pitt) as an example. In 2002, Pitt opened Molecular Biology Information Services (MBIS) with the purpose to identify new tools in bioinformatics and teach faculty and students how to use them (Chattopadhyay, 2020). They watched as their customer list exceeded 5,000 users; they also noted an increase of citations and publications (p. 882). The benefits to the library and the university included reduced costs (as the institutional licensing fees were less costly than personal ones and there was an opportunity to share facilities), access to multiple high-end bioinformatics tools, and an increased visibility of librarians (there was also increase in number of librarian jobs created over the years). Thanks to the continuous evaluation, the MBIS was able to notice that in 2015 there was a shift in the researchers' need for information. They were no longer interested in training in gene/protein retrieval, microarray, and

BLAST, but craved for training in mutation analysis of whole genome sequence and the entire exome sequencing analysis. Noticing the change in current trends has helped the Pitt to re-adjust their services. The survey analysis (Chattopadhyay, 2020) confirmed the library was on the right track. The university's library was able to save funds, increase the visibility of their librarians, increase the library's staffing and most importantly offer services that were highly desired by their customers.

References

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